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Records Management

9/69

MEMORANDUM FOR: Executive Director-Comptroller

SUBJECT : Records Program

1. Paragraph 8 of this memorandum offers recommendations for your approval.

2. Our efforts during the past year to purge the records we have in storage resulted in a net reduction of 4,196 cubic feet. We have again examined the overall problem in an attempt to discover the reasons purging does not seem to offer a solution to our records storage problem. We find that we have four major categories of material stored at the Records Center, but only one of them, the inactive records category, qualifies technically for Records Center storage. We need to re-evaluate each of these categories and define them in terms that are acceptable generally; to assign responsibilities and devise storage systems for each of them; and to develop new policies and procedures to govern the records program of the Agency and provide for the management of the personnel primarily concerned with it.

3. At the end of August 1969 the Agency's records holdings totalled 98,915 cubic feet:

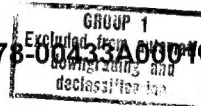
a. Supplemental Distribution	17,686
<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 280px; height: 20px;"></div>	
b. Vital Documents	9,095
c. Inactive Records	64,281
d. Archives (including materials identified for Presidential Libraries)	7,853

4. Supplemental Distribution (17,686 cubic feet)

a. The Supplemental Distribution category is composed of extra copies of finished intelligence publications which have been distributed throughout the Intelligence Community. Some individually determined quantity of each of these publications is held in reserve to satisfy requests from customers for

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extra copies or additional distribution. The Central Reference Service in the Intelligence Directorate gives the Records Center instructions for storage and must authorize the release of documents to offices outside the Agency. There is a high turn-over as individual publications are re-issued, up-dated, or revised. Activity averages 250 services a day.

b. Responsibility for storing and distributing these publications as a service to the Intelligence Directorate was accepted by the Records Center several years ago when the volumes were much smaller and space was not a problem. The Records Center has continued to furnish the storage and distribution service over the years because it represents a convenience to the Agency and records center storage space has been the cheapest kind of available space suitable to the activity.

c. Nevertheless, the problem is not a records problem. It is a problem of distribution and space. It should not be a part of the Records Program and neither the Records Management Board nor the Records Administration Branch should be held accountable for its solution. Responsibility for resolution of the distribution problem and the custody and control of the materials should be assumed by the Intelligence Directorate. These holdings should be carefully reviewed to determine whether this volume is really necessary. Other Agency facilities are presently being examined to determine whether documents held for supplemental distribution can be stored elsewhere and removed entirely from the records management program.

5. Vital Documents (9,095 cubic feet)

25X1A a. Vital Documents are documents selected by the various components of the Agency as being essential to the reconstitution and continued operation of the Agency in the event a catastrophe strikes the headquarters building. They exist as a separate collection as a part of the emergency planning program and must be where they will be accessible in time of emergency. The [redacted] is the emergency relocation site for the Agency and this is the reason the Vital Documents are located there. They are stored in the Records Center only because, incidentally, the Records Center is at the relocation site. They were moved into the Records Center from Building [redacted] in 1961 to make the space available for other purposes and to save manpower.

25X1A b. As long as the Emergency Planning Program of the Agency remains unchanged, these documents should continue to be

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stored at the relocation center. There are among them, however, about 2,500 cubic feet of vital documents stored by NPIC. In the event of an emergency requiring relocation, most of NPIC is expected to be co-located with the Department of Defense. The NPIC vital documents should be removed from the Agency relocation center and transferred to the Department of Defense relocation site where NPIC is expected to operate in time of emergency.

c. The remainder of the vital documents should be critically reviewed in relation to the current true significance of the overall emergency plan.

6. Archives (7,853 cubic feet)

a. Archives are historical documents which must be kept permanently. They are different from inactive records. They are historically and scholastically significant while inactive records are operationally and administratively significant. They are the permanent historical documentation of the Agency while inactive records are temporary extensions of headquarters file space. As defined by the Civil Service Commission for the Archives of the United States, archives are "(1) those bodies of non-current permanently valuable records that form useful evidence of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations or other activities of Federal Agencies or very important Federal officials, or (2) those records that must, or should, be preserved for their informational content..... Archival records document official actions and serve as sources for official reference in the prosecution of the affairs of Government by providing a record of past actions. The information contained in archives is essential to historians, political scientists, economists, sociologists, or other scholars engaged in study of various aspects of our society."

b. In addition to the 7,853 cubic feet of material already segregated as archival and Presidential Library material, there are about 9,000 cubic feet of OSS and predecessor organization records recalled from the Archives of the United States in 1959 at the direction of the Director of Central Intelligence. Another 15,000 cubic feet of CIA material designated for permanent retention is stored with the inactive records collection. The 24,000 cubic feet made up of the 9,000 feet of OSS and 15,000 feet of permanent Agency material require screening and appraisal to select those documents which are truly archival. Until they are screened the total collection of 24,000 cubic feet must be considered as part of the archives. Instead of 7,853 cubic feet of archives, therefore, in reality we have 31,853 cubic feet of archival material.

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c. Screening and appraisal should be conducted by, or under the supervision of, qualified professional archivists. It should not be left to records officers or records center personnel. The basic premises of permanent archival retention are in direct conflict with the basic premises of records disposition. The objective of one is to retain and the objective of the other is to dispose.

d. Professional archival work involves the following broad, but not mutually exclusive, functions:

- (1) appraisal and disposition,
- (2) arrangement and description,
- (3) preservation and rehabilitation,
- (4) documentary publication, historical editing and exhibit of archival materials, and
- (5) reference service.

A sampling of these functions are described below to further clarify the professional distinctions between archivists and records management Officers:

(1) Records appraisal and disposition involves the analysis and evaluation of inactive records to determine their continuing values and to provide advice or make decisions about their destruction or permanent retention. Archivists employ a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the history, organization and operations of the Agency, the legislative authorities and responsibilities of the Agency as these relate to the development and retention of records; the organizational, functional and records relationships of the Agency to other agencies and activities in the intelligence community and Federal Government at large; and the needs of the scholarly community.

(2) Archivists engaged in records arrangement study the origins, the organizational and functional history and administrative procedures of the producing units. They analyze the records to decide the arrangement that will best reveal their character and significance; protect their integrity as historical evidence of organization and function; and facilitate their location, description and use.

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(3) Preservation involves safeguarding the archival material from deterioration or impairment of their value through alteration. It considers the condition of the records; the nature of their evidential or informational values; the extent of their use; and the cost of repair or rehabilitation.

(4) Archivists involved in publication work carefully study the documents to be published to resolve questions of origin and authenticity. They employ a thorough knowledge of the substance of the documents and persons, circumstances, or events to which the documents relate.

e. Not only do archives require professional competence which differs from that of records officers, but they are administered differently, require a higher quality of storage space to ensure their permanent preservation, and require a different kind and frequency of servicing than other categories of records. Professionally and administratively, archives are different from the basic principles of records management and they should not be a part of the records management program. Archives are historical documents used primarily by researchers and historians. They are the sources from which historical narratives are written. As such they are much more closely related to the functions of the Historical Staff than to the records management functions. A position for at least one senior archivist should be created on the Historical Staff and responsibility for the archives program of the Agency should be assigned to that Staff. The archives function, however, should not be considered as subordinate to the historical function. Some historians are inclined to feel that the document can be destroyed after the history has been written. This, of course, is a misconception. Different historians interpret history differently and a single document can serve more than one historical or scholarly purpose including political, sociological, and economic considerations, for example. For these reasons it is suggested that there should be a separate archival function as a part of the overall responsibility of the Historical Staff.

f. Archives require a higher quality of storage space than other record materials do, more like a library than a warehouse, with air conditioning, heat and humidity controls. The low level of activity and requests for service make the archives a logical choice for location away from the [redacted] Records Center. Long term building plans should include provision for archival storage. Meanwhile we are evaluating space [redacted] to determine the feasibility of moving the archival collection there.

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7. Inactive Records (64,281 cubic feet)

a. Inactive records are those records upon which all current action is completed and which are required so infrequently in the conduct of current business that they may be removed from offices and stored elsewhere without impairing daily operations. They are records which must be retained for a definite period of time in order to comply with established legal or operational requirements. Certain financial documents, for example, must be retained for 56 years, others must be retained for twelve years, and official personnel files must be retained for 75 years. Inactive records of these types with fixed retention periods are considered to be temporary. Some inactive records must be retained permanently according to law. Permanent inactive records eventually become archives with the intention that they will be retained forever.

b. Among the four categories of records discussed, only the inactive records qualify technically for records center storage; only inactive records meet the criteria established by law and the Archivist of the United States for such storage. It is this volume, then, to which the records management program of the Agency should be primarily directed.

c. As indicated in the foregoing discussion of the archives, there are about 9,000 cubic feet of OSS and predecessor organization records, and about 15,000 cubic feet of CIA records among the inactive records holdings which have been scheduled for permanent retention, and should be considered as part of the archives collection. If this 24,000 cubic foot volume is deducted from the total current volume of 64,281 cubic feet and transferred to the archives, there will remain only 40,281 cubic feet of inactive records. These are the only records stored which should be a part of the records program of the Agency. Control over the growth of this volume should be a primary responsibility of the records management program of the Agency.

d. We are in the process of negotiating a contract for the conduct of a study at the [] records center to determine the feasibility of installing electrically driven movable shelving to permit a significant compaction of the materials stored. If feasible, it is estimated that such an installation will increase the present storage capacity by about forty percent. We are also planning to create a group of technically qualified personnel to study the systems practicability of adopting microform techniques to provide storage and retrieval

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systems suitable for the various record keeping operations in the Agency.

e. Microforms and movable shelving, however, will provide only temporary relief for a few years and will not solve the basic problem of increasing records volumes and the requirement to store them. Not only does hard copy grow at the rate of three cubic feet per employee per year, but there are rapidly growing requirements for the storage of film, magnetic tapes and other forms of electronic recording media which may well exceed whatever capacity we may gain by improving the utilization of present space.

f. Under the present policy, we operate a central storage facility but exercise no control over what or how much comes into it, how long it must be kept, or when and if it may be destroyed. If we are to gain control over the growth of records in storage we cannot continue this practice. Even more basic than control over the storage, however, is the need for systematic management of records beginning with their creation. Total records management programs include creation, maintenance, and disposition. Our emphasis has always been on disposition, with periodic concentrations of effort on purging. We need to systematically alter that concentration and direct our attention to correspondence management, forms management, reports management - especially computer reports -, copying machines, and all other methods of records creation. There are more than 220,000 cubic feet of current records in headquarters office space. We need to concentrate on file creation and maintenance systems to ensure that we maintain only those documents and files that are necessary to the day to day conduct of our business. We need to provide a system to ensure that only those records which must be retained for a specified period, temporary or permanent, are transferred to the Records Center.

g. These purposes can only be accomplished through the creation of a single records program under unified management. Several steps will be necessary to put such a program into being:

(1) The creation of a Senior Records Management Board under the DD/S with specific authority to direct a centralized program;

(2) selection, from among the more than 400 positions in the Agency identified with records responsibilities in one form or another, of those positions which should be devoted fully to records management;

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(3) the creation of a career service or some equivalent personnel management system to provide for the training and long term career development of individuals primarily concerned with records management responsibilities;

(4) the systematic designation of offices of record which will be responsible for maintaining records of a particular category in order to avoid multiple filing and retention of the same documents;

(5) the review of regularly produced reports from all sources to validate their continuing need and value for record retention purposes;

(6) the development of a centralized system for the management planning and control of microform applications which promise to mushroom much like computers have done during the past fifteen years; and

(7) the publication of policies and procedures to provide the framework for such an overall records management program.

8. Recommendations

It is recommended that:

a. Responsibility for the storage and servicing of Supplemental Distribution documents be assumed by the Deputy Director for Intelligence who has the basic responsibility for the function, and that space be sought for their location away from the [] Records Center;

b. the practicality of the Emergency Planning Program of the Agency be reevaluated; that meanwhile vital documents continue to be stored at the Records Center but that the DD/I assume responsibility for relocating vital documents stored by NPIC to its relocation site;

c. a position be created on the Historical Staff for a senior archivist; the responsibility for the archives program be assigned to the Historical Staff; that space for their storage be sought at [] other suitable location away from the [] Records Center, and that permanent archives space be included in long term building plans; and

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d. the concept of a centralized records management program be approved and the DD/S authorized to proceed with the development of a program as outlined in paragraph 7f above.

R. L. Bannerman
Deputy Director
for Support

DDS/SSS/RHW:jms (12 September 1969)

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